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## State Supreme Court: Wiggins and Johnson

Of all the races on the primary ballot due Tuesday, the most important are those for the state Supreme Court.

That's because a judicial candidate who gets more than 50 percent of the vote in the primary is elected. Other races will be decided in November's general election.

We interviewed the judicial candidates and have made recommendations. We're waiting until the primary election is over to recommend candidates in the other races.

If you would like to see our interview with the state Supreme Court candidates, check out [youtube.com/charterchannel3](http://youtube.com/charterchannel3) online. Each interview is broken down into several 10-minute segments, so you will have to click on each segment separately if you want to catch the whole thing.

### Position 6

In judicial campaigns, the incumbent with experience has an advantage. Their record is proven and that usually helps.

But Supreme Court Justice Richard Sanders has made some decisions that have hurt him this election year. So much so, that one of his challengers has racked up an impressive list of endorsements in the state's judicial system.

Charlie Wiggins, a well respected attorney from Bainbridge Island, has the support of nearly all the prosecuting attorneys in Washington, as well as endorsements from U.S. attorneys and judges from around the state.

When that many people close to the courts endorse a newcomer, it sends the message they want the incumbent out.

Another challenger in the race is Bryan Chushcoff, a Pierce County Superior Court judge. He is a qualified candidate, but his campaign has been pretty low-key. Wiggins seems to want it more and has been going after Sanders full-throttle.

Sanders is a maverick and often keeps the majority of justices on their toes. That's a good thing. But Sanders once decided an attorney convicted of sexually molesting an 11-year-old boy should be suspended. His fellow justices wanted the lawyer disbarred. Sanders said he was following the rules set out by the American Bar Association, while his fellow judges felt it was justified to go outside them. This is just one example of his independent streak that has made him vulnerable this election year.

Sanders has served the court well for 15 years, but we are swayed by the large number of people in the court system who say it's time for Sanders to go.

For state Supreme Court Position 6, the Tri-City Herald editorial board recommends Charlie Wiggins.

#### Position 1

The Supreme Court race for Position 1 is between Justice Jim Johnson and challenger Stan Rumbaugh, a hard-working attorney who is active in the Tacoma community.

Johnson has served on the State Supreme Court for six years and is a strong supporter of individual rights, especially when it comes to property disputes. He is known for his analytical approach and has earned respect among his colleagues, earning endorsements from four other state Supreme Court justices.

Rumbaugh is a highly skilled attorney who questions Johnson's ties with certain special interest groups. Johnson, however, has been able to justify all of his decisions based on his judicial principles.

He's done a good job for the state Supreme Court and his experience gives him the edge.

For the State Supreme Court Position 1, we recommend Jim Johnson.

Read more: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2010/08/15/1130993/state-supreme-court-wiggins-and.html#ixzz0wnhHGirz>